

HISTORICAL FIRSTS OF PINCKNEYVILLE  
AND PERRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

by  
Robert M. Spurgeon

English 112  
Dr. Luchsinger  
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AND STATE DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON

Report of the  
Committee on the  
Attorney General

Revised 1935  
Dr. L. B. Nichols  
April 23, 1935

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To my mother, Elizabeth Eiker Spurgeon, many thanks for her suggestions of materials and the use of her personal library from which all material in this paper has been researched.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Historical Firsts of Pinckneyville and Perry County, Illinois

In this paper I will attempt to observe, discover, and record historical firsts which have occurred at Pinckneyville and in Perry County, of which Pinckneyville is the county seat. In this paper I will also attempt to point out such historical firsts as the county's formation, the original pioneers, industry, education, religion, and other facts of interest and importance.

Perry County, like many of the counties in Southern Illinois, is rich in historical facts. Many men added to the history of Perry County. Some notable ones were George Rogers Clark who marched through Perry County on his way to Vincennes, General John A. Logan, civil war hero who belonged to the Masonic Lodge in Pinckneyville, Missouri outlaw Sam Hildebrand who was killed in Pinckneyville while resisting arrest, and noted Mormon pioneer John Brown who left Perry County after joining the Mormon Church and as a member of Brigham Young's party was one of the first men to enter the Great Salt Lake Valley.<sup>1</sup>

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF PERRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

In this paper I will attempt to observe, discover, and record historical facts which have occurred in Perry County, Illinois. In this paper I will also attempt to point out such historical facts as the county's formation, the original pioneers, industry, education, religion, and other facts of interest and importance.

Perry County, like many of the counties in Southern Illinois, is rich in historical facts. Many men added to the history of Perry County. Among notable ones were George Rogers Clark who marched through Perry County on his way to Vincennes, General John A. Logan, still well known and honored as the "Honor Roll" in Perry County. Missouri soldiers and Illinois soldiers who were killed in Perry County while fighting against the Indians. Noted Western pioneer John Brown who left Perry County after joining the Western Church and was a member of Brigham Young's party was one of the first men to enter the Great Salt Lake Valley.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

<sup>1</sup>Autobiography of Pioneer John Brown, Arranged and  
Published by His Son, John Zimmerman Brown, A.B., M.D.  
(Press of Stevens & Wallis, Inc. 1941).

EXHIBIT

Anticipation of Plaintiff's Death, Affidavit and  
Testimony by His Son, John Alexander Brown, A.B., M.D.  
(Estate of George A. Brown, Inc., 1941).



## CHAPTER TWO

### COUNTY FORMATION

The formation of Perry County was approved on January 29th, 1827, by the Illinois Legislative meeting at Vandalia, then the state capital of Illinois. The county was named in honor of American Naval hero, Commodore Oliver H. Perry, who defeated the British in the battle of Lake Erie. Perry County was made up of parts from both Randolph and Jackson counties. In 1832, the eastern boundary was extended to the Little Muddy River into what was then Franklin County.<sup>2</sup>

### FIRST COUNTY OFFICES

In anticipation of the County approval, Theophilis W. Smith, Associate Justice of this Judicial District, appointed Humphrey B. Jones as circuit clerk for an election to be held at Amos Anderson's home located on Panther Creek, east of Pinckneyville. There are no records of this election in the Perry County Court House, but due to the efforts of a Dr. Brayshaw, it appears that this election may have been declared illegal by State officials. Although there are no records, a second election appears to have been held with the following people being elected and sworn into office: for Commissioners: John R. Hutchings, David H. Mead, and Elijah Wells; for Sheriff; William C. Murphy; and for Coronor: Amos Anderson.

COUNTY ORGANIZATION

The formation of Perry County was approved on January 1827, by the Illinois Legislative meeting at Vandalia, then the state capital of Illinois. The county was named in honor of American Naval hero, Commodore Oliver H. Perry, who defeated the British in the battle of Lake Erie. Perry County was made up of parts from both Randolph and Jackson counties. In 1835, the eastern boundary was extended to the Little Miami River into what was then Franklin County.

FIRST COUNTY OFFICERS

In anticipation of the County approval, Theophilus W. Smith, Associate Justice of the Federal District, appointed Humphrey B. Jones as circuit clerk for an election to be held at Anderson's home located on Fisher Creek, east of Piquetteville. There are no records of this election in the Perry County Court House, but due to the efforts of W. Dr. Brewster, it appears that this election may have been declared illegal by State officials. Although there are no records, a second election appears to have been held with the following people being elected and sworn into office: for Commissioners: John R. Hueston, David H. Mann, and Eliza Wells; for Sheriff: William C. Murphy; and for Deputies: Isaac Anderson.

These men were the first elected officials sworn into office in Perry County.<sup>3</sup>

#### FIRST COUNTY SEAT

The first and only county seat Perry County has ever had is the City of Pinckneyville. The site for the County Seat was selected October 22, 1827 by a committee of three men. This location is the present day city of Pinckneyville and is approximately in the center of the county.<sup>4</sup> Pinckneyville is believed to have been named in honor of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Revolutionary war hero from South Carolina. However, as of this date, no records to verify this have been found.

#### FIRST KNOWN GRAVE MARKER IN COUNTY

The oldest known marked grave in Perry County is that of Ephraim B., son of Robert and Kezia McElvain, who died January 5, 1822, at 5 months of age. The grave is located in the McElvain Cemetery south of Highway 152 about one mile west of DuQuoin.<sup>5</sup>

#### FIRST INHABITANTS OF PERRY COUNTY

The first inhabitants of Perry County were undoubtedly American Indians of the Tamaroa and Kaskaskia tribes. It is not known if these Indians lived in Perry County for long periods of time, or for short periods during hunts; however, it is known that two of their favorite camp areas were on what is known as "Hutchings Prairie" in the northern part of Perry County, and in what is known as "Four Mile Prairie" south of



Pinckneyville. Early settlers describe evidence of an Indian battle with the prairie being littered with human bones. It is believed that this battle was fought between the Kaskaskia and Kickapoo tribes.<sup>6</sup>

The first permanent white settler was John Flack who settled in Four Mile Prairie, near what later became Pennyville. When Flack arrived, the only white people in the county were a family by the name of Cox who had taken up a temporary residence near Beaucoup Creek. Cox and his family soon moved on.<sup>7</sup>

#### FIRST STORE IN PINCKNEYVILLE

In 1830, the first store in Pinckneyville was operated by David Baldrige in the court house which he leased from the county for \$.75 a month except during times of court. Josiah B. Denning also issued a merchant's license the same year Baldrige and opened a place of business shortly after him.<sup>8</sup>

#### FIRST COURT HOUSE

The first court house was located on the southeast corner of Lot 32 in Pinckneyville, according to the original survey. This is the location where the law offices of Hohlt, House, DeMoss, and Johnson are now doing business. The building was constructed of logs, was 18 feet by 22 feet, with a puncheon floor, no ceiling, one door, and a window facing the west.

people with the estate is being litigated with James Hensley. It is believed that this estate was the between the Hensleys and Hensley estate.

The first permanent white settler was John Black who settled in Deep Mile Prairie, near what is now called Pennsylvania. John Black arrived the first white people in the county as a family by the name of Cox and John Cox was a settler in the Hensley tract. Cox and his family were the

In 1830, the first store in Pennsylvania was operated by David Hensley in the town of Hensley which was located from the county for \$2.50 a year except during times of drought. David Hensley also located a merchant's store in the year 1830 as Hensley and opened a line of business shortly after.

The first white house was located on the northeast corner of lot 32 in Pennsylvania, according to the original survey. This is the location where the first office of Hensley was. Hensley and Johnson are on today's map. The building was constructed of logs, was 18 feet by 22 feet, with a gable roof, no ceiling, one door, and a window facing the west.

The furniture consisted of a table, a bench for the public, and a bar for the Judge. Having been completed in September 1828, the first court was held on April 10, 1829. The second courthouse ■■■ constructed of brick and ■■■ erected in 1837 on the public square after the original building became too small.<sup>9</sup>

#### FIRST JAIL

The first jail in Perry County ■■■ constructed on the ■■■ site as our present jail now stands. It ■■■ constructed during 1833 and 1834 of brick with 3 inner walls of square timber. It ■■■ ■ two story building with inside dimensions of 14 x 16 feet. The county paid Amos Anderson a sum of \$750 for its construction.<sup>10</sup>

#### THE FIRST MURDER TRIAL

The first murder trial in Perry County ■■■ held after a change of venue ■■■ granted in St. Clair County. The defendant ■■■ William Corberly, who ■■■ found guilty and sentenced to two months and three weeks in the penitentiary of which two weeks were to be spent in solitary confinement.

The first execution for murder ■■■ that of James Vaughn who murdered William Watts, city marshall of Tamaroa, ■■■ Watts was attempting to arrest Vaughn for disturbing the peace. Vaughn ■■■ convicted and sentenced to be hung. The execution was carried out on June 16th, 1882 in the present day Perry County jail. Thirty five minutes after he ■■■ dropped through the trap he was pronounced dead.<sup>11</sup>





### FIRST RAILROAD

The Illinois Central has the honor of being Perry County's first railroad. It entered the county from the north through Tamaroa then on to DuQuoin. Construction on the line from Chicago to Cairo was begun in 1851. The construction of the Illinois Central was considered an engineering miracle. Laborers were recruited from the east, with the rails coming from England, and the ties and bridge timbers coming from Michigan. Construction in Perry County was completed around 1853, and the town of DuQuoin was moved to its present site from Old DuQuoin.<sup>12</sup>

### FIRST SALT WORKS

Perry County's first salt works ■■■■ located in the village of St. John north of DuQuoin. Salt was discovered in 1870 at ■ depth of 3600 feet while drilling to determine strata for coal mining purposes. The salt works became ■ large industry employing approximately 350 people.<sup>13</sup>

### FIRST MILL

The first mill seems to be that of Elijah Wells, which he constructed on the west side of Nine Mile Prairie, east of Pinckneyville sometime previous to 1829.<sup>14</sup>



### FIRST STREET CAR

Perry County's first and only street car operated between the towns of DuQuoin and the village of St. Johns and was constructed in 1882. Cars were pulled by horses and mules. The passengers were charged 5¢ per person.<sup>15</sup>

### FIRST POST OFFICE

The first post office was in the residence of H. B. Jones. His house was located near a spring in what is now the north end of Pinckneyville near 419 North Sullivan St.<sup>16</sup>

### FIRST TAVERN

The first tavern licensed in Perry County was that of Amos Anderson, located in his home southeast of Pinckneyville. The first licensed tavern to appear in Pinckneyville was in 1829 and was in the home of Joseph Wells. It was a little log cabin located where Braun Standard Station now stands.<sup>17</sup>

### FIRST PREACHING

The first organized preaching was probably done around 1828 or 1829 by Micaiah Phelps, a Methodist.<sup>18</sup>

### FIRST CHURCH

The first church built in Perry County was the Hopewell Presbyterian Church which was completed in 1833. Hopewell was located about four miles west of Pinckneyville, and

Early County's first and only street car operated between the  
town of Potosi and the village of St. Johns and was constructed  
in 1884. Cars were pulled by horses and mules. The passengers  
were charged 10 cents.

#### STREET CAR

The first street car was in the territory of N. A. Jones.  
His house was located near a spring in St. Johns and the horse  
and ox line ran near St. Johns Mill, N. A. Jones.

The first street car was in the territory of N. A. Jones.  
located in his home southeast of Potosi.  
The first street car was in the territory of Potosi.  
1884 and was in the town of Potosi. It was a horse  
and ox line.

#### STREET CAR

The first street car was in the territory of Potosi.  
or 1884 or 1885.

#### STREET CAR

The first street car was in the territory of Potosi.  
constructed in 1884. It was a horse  
and ox line.

approximately one-fourth mile south of Highway 154.

The church merged with Pinckneyville in 1947 and all that remains today is the cemetery and a commemorative marker.<sup>10</sup>

#### FIRST MASONIC LODGE

Mitchell Lodge No. 85 was the first Masonic Lodge in the county chartered October 8, 1850; and in later years had one of its members General John A. Logan. A copy of his petition is still on hand at the Lodge.<sup>20</sup>

#### FIRST EDUCATION

The first school taught in present day Perry County was taught by Robert Clark in 1825, near what is now Denmark. This was previous to the formation of Perry County and was located in what was Randolph County.

B.G. Roots opened an academy near Tamaroa in 1839 and had such well known pupils as Supreme Court Judge Allen and General John A. Logan.<sup>21</sup>

Old DuQuoin boasts the county's first Seminary, founded in 1852 by "The Boston Ladies Society for the Promotion of Christian Education". Their institution was known as the "DuQuoin Female Seminary". The last term was completed in 1892, and the school stood empty until 1898 when it burned. Today there is no physical evidence left of the school.<sup>22</sup>

merged with the ... in 1947 and all other

... today is the ... and a ...

... was the first ... in the ...  
... and in later years had as one of its  
... John A. ... a copy of his ... is still  
on hand at the ...

### EDUCATION

The first school taught in present day Perry County was founded  
by Robert Clark in 1812, near what is now ... This was  
provision for the education of Perry County and was located in  
what was Raleigh County.

S. G. ... opened a academy near ... in 1820 and had upon  
well known public ... and ...

John A. ...

Old ... the county's first ... in  
1822 by "The ... for the promotion of  
"Christian Education". This institution was known as the  
"Union Female Seminary". The ... in  
1822, and the school moved ... when it ...  
Today there is no physical evidence left of the school.

FIRST BRIDGE

The first bridge built in the county was around 1830 or 1831 across Beaucoup Creek east of Pinckneyville. The county gave the contract to build the 16 foot wide bridge to Joseph Wells who was required to give bonds to guarantee the bridge for five years.<sup>23</sup>

FIRST REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER CERTIFIED FOR PENSION

Leonard Lipe and Lewis Wells in September 1832, and Benjamin Johnson in May of 1833 were the first Revolutionary soldiers certified as entitled to receive pensions by the Perry County Circuit Court.<sup>24</sup>

FIRST FAIR

The Perry County fair at Pinckneyville ~~was~~ not only the first fair in Perry County, but is the oldest continuous fair in the State. Started before the Civil War in the year of 1856 while Pinckneyville was just 28 years old, this year the fair will be 118 years old and still going strong.<sup>25</sup>

FIRST COAL MINE

Perry County has many assets, but one of its greatest is its coal. Coal has virtually been the life blood of Perry County. Coal mines were virtually nonexistent in the county until after the coming of the railroad. In 1855, Cornelius Storm and J. C. Storm, his son, were sent to sink shafts along the

The first order built in the county was around 1830 or 1831  
across the county from east of the county. The county gave  
the contract to build and it took time to build. The  
first order was to build and to give the bid for five  
years.

FIRST REVOLUTIONARY ORDER

Benjamin Pike and Lewis Pike in September 1831, and Benjamin  
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Court.

The Perry County Court at Pleasantville was not only the  
first in Perry County, but also the oldest continuous court in the  
State. It was before the Civil War in the year of 1850  
while Pleasantville was just 28 years old. In the year the  
court will be 118 years old and still going strong.

Perry County has many assets, but one of the greatest is its  
court. The court has been in the place of Perry County  
court since the first Revolutionary war in the county court.  
After the coming of the Civil War, in 1850, the court  
and J. O. Smith, his son, were sent to a court along the



Illinois Central Railroad property. They were employed by the railroad. They selected ■ site near the present day village of St. Johns, thus starting an industry that still thrives today.

Today there are no shaft mines operating in Perry County, ■ strip mining has completely taken over. Strip mining began with landowners using horses pulling scoops to uncover small outcroppings of coal near the earth's surface. Commercial operations were begun by Thomas J. Howells at DuQuoin in 1904 when he purchased ■ steam shovel that had previously been used to help dig the Panama Canal, thus beginning  
26  
Perry County's largest industry.

#### FIRST MARRIAGE

The first marriage license issued in Perry County ■■ on November 17th, 1827, to Alexander Clark and Ruth Teague, who were married by County Commissioner Elijah Wells on November 22, 1837. Ruth died in Perry County and is buried in Galum Baptist Cemetery, west of Pinckneyville; and Alexander died in  
27  
Missouri in 1862.

#### FIRST DOCTOR

Dr. Joseph Brayshaw is regarded as Perry County's first physician. From South Carolina, he came to Old DuQuoin in 1830. He visited his patients wherever he was needed, traveling by horseback or horse and buggy, even going to adjoining



counties. He was well educated, and his hobby was grafting fruit trees. He taught the art to many of his friends and neighbors.<sup>28</sup>



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<sup>3</sup>Ibid, pp. 178-179.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p. 165.

<sup>5</sup>Information Based on Research by Mrs. Elizabeth Eiker  
Spurgeon, Pinckneyville, Illinois.

<sup>6</sup>History of Randolph, Monroe and Perry Counties,  
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<sup>7</sup>Ibid, p. 83

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, p. 336

<sup>9</sup>History of Perry County and City of Pinckneyville,  
Charles H. Roe, Sr., Published in Perry County Fair Centennial  
Book, 1956, p. 79. (See Artist's Concept of First Court House,  
Chapter Three, p.

<sup>10</sup>History of Randolph, Monroe and Perry Counties,  
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Corresponding Office, Edwardsville, Illinois, p. 172.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, p. 174.

<sup>12</sup>DuQuoin Evening Call Centennial Edition, Saturday,  
September 19, 1953.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid

<sup>14</sup>History of Randolph, Monroe and Perry Counties,  
Published by J. L. McDonough & Co., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,  
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<sup>15</sup>DuQuoin Evening Call Centennial Edition, Saturday, September 19, 1953.

<sup>16</sup>History of Randolph, Monroe and Perry Counties.  
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<sup>17</sup>Ibid, p. 337

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p. 337

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, p. 337

<sup>20</sup>Records of Mitchell Lodge No. 85, Pinckneyville, Illinois.

<sup>21</sup>Tamaroa School History, Mrs. Verda Hilt, Published in  
proceedings of Perry County Historical Society, 1955-1956.

<sup>22</sup>DuQuoin Evening Call Centennial Edition, Saturday,  
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<sup>23</sup>History of Randolph, Monroe and Perry Counties.  
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Corresponding Office, Edwardsville, Illinois, p. 169.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid, p. 73

<sup>25</sup>Article by Gale D. Hicks, Perry County Fair Centennial  
Book, 1956

<sup>26</sup>DuQuoin Evening Call Centennial Edition, Saturday,  
September 19, 1953.

<sup>27</sup>Perry County, Illinois, Marriages 1827-1850, Elizabeth  
Eiker Spurgeon, Copyright 1973, Heritage House, Thompson,  
Illinois.

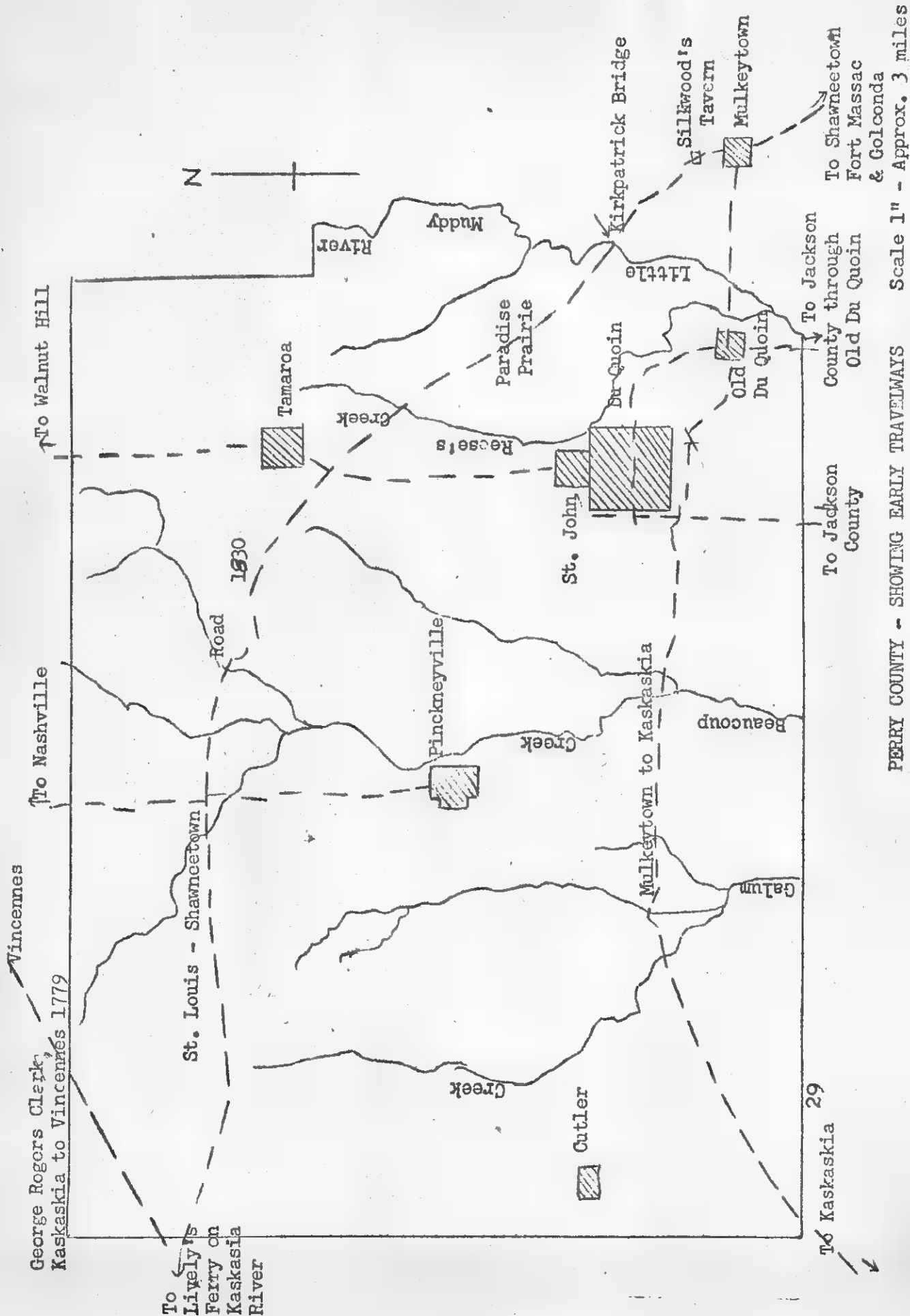
<sup>28</sup>DuQuoin Evening Call Centennial Edition, Saturday,  
September 19, 1953.





### CHAPTER THREE







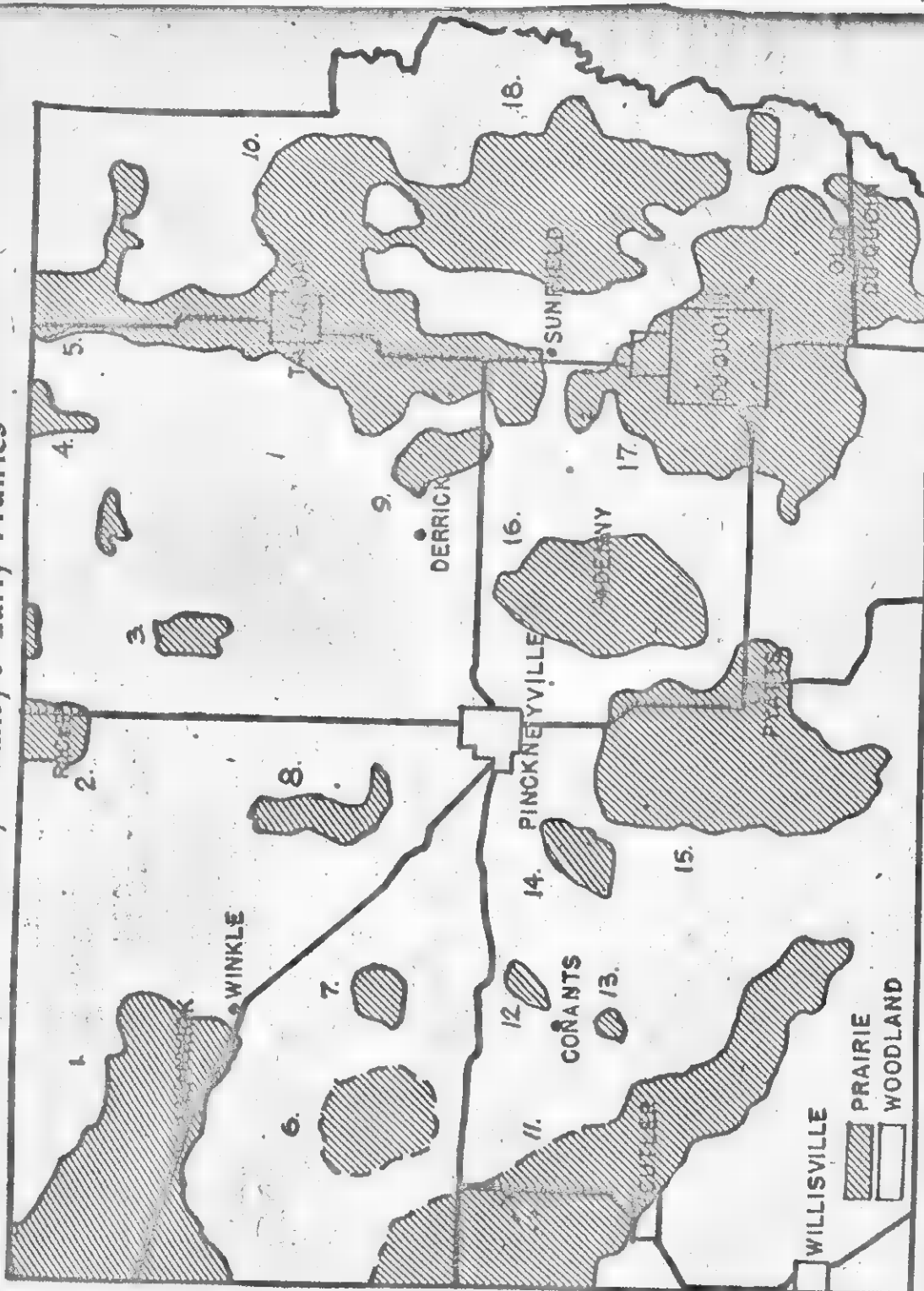
6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
Laurel Street					
18	17	Jones 16 12.56 1/4	15	14	13
19	Anderson 20 8.00	Glover 21 22.00	A. Anderson 22 16.50	23 6.00	24
Jackson Street					
30	28	PUBLIC SQUARE Locust House Here	26 26.00	25	
31	29		27 27.00	34	
	(32) 1st Court		33 33.00		
Water Street					
40	Matt Vann 39 17.50	Wells 38 32.50	37	Wm. Threlkeld 36 15.50	35
41	Eli Sherratt 42 13.00	Brown 43 26.50	CRAN 44 16.00	45	46
Mulberry Street					
52	51	50	49	48	47

Plat of original town of Pinckneyville, Illinois  
 recorded on page 39 in Book A - 1827 - 1832  
 Deed Record - Perry County, Illinois.  
 Scale 200' - 1 inch

Lots 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33 - 66' wide - 99' long  
 All other lots - 99' square  
 Main Street - 60' wide  
 Laurel, Mulberry Streets - 54' wide  
 Locust, Walnut Streets - 50' wide  
 Jackson, Water Streets - 44' wide  
 Alley No. 1, Alley No. 2 - 24' wide



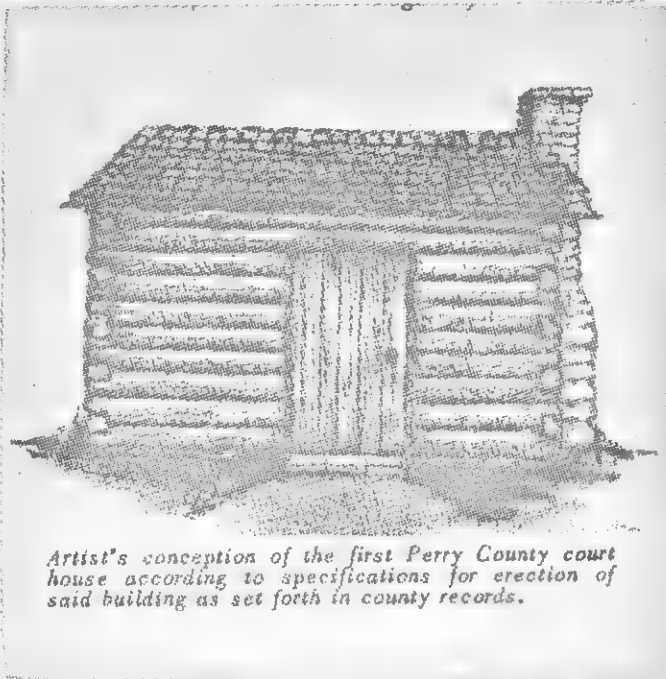
# Perry County's Early Prairies



Perry county, before the white man came, was made up of a series of prairies which got their names from first settlers, important incidents, etc. This map by Julius Swayne, a native of Du Quoin who is now on the faculty at Southern Illinois University, shows the more important regions. By number they include: 1—Grand Cote. 2—Round Prairie. 3—Hutchings. 4—Mud Prairie. 5—Upper Paradise. 6—Last Prairie. 7—Rush Prairie. 8—Burnt Prairie. 9—Upper Holt's. 10—Johnson's (part of Paradise). 11—Six Mile Prairie. 12—Eaton's Prairie. 13—Conant's Prairie. 14—Galum. 15—Four Mile Prairie. 16—Lower Holt's Prairie. 17—Nine Mile. 18—Lower Paradise Prairie.

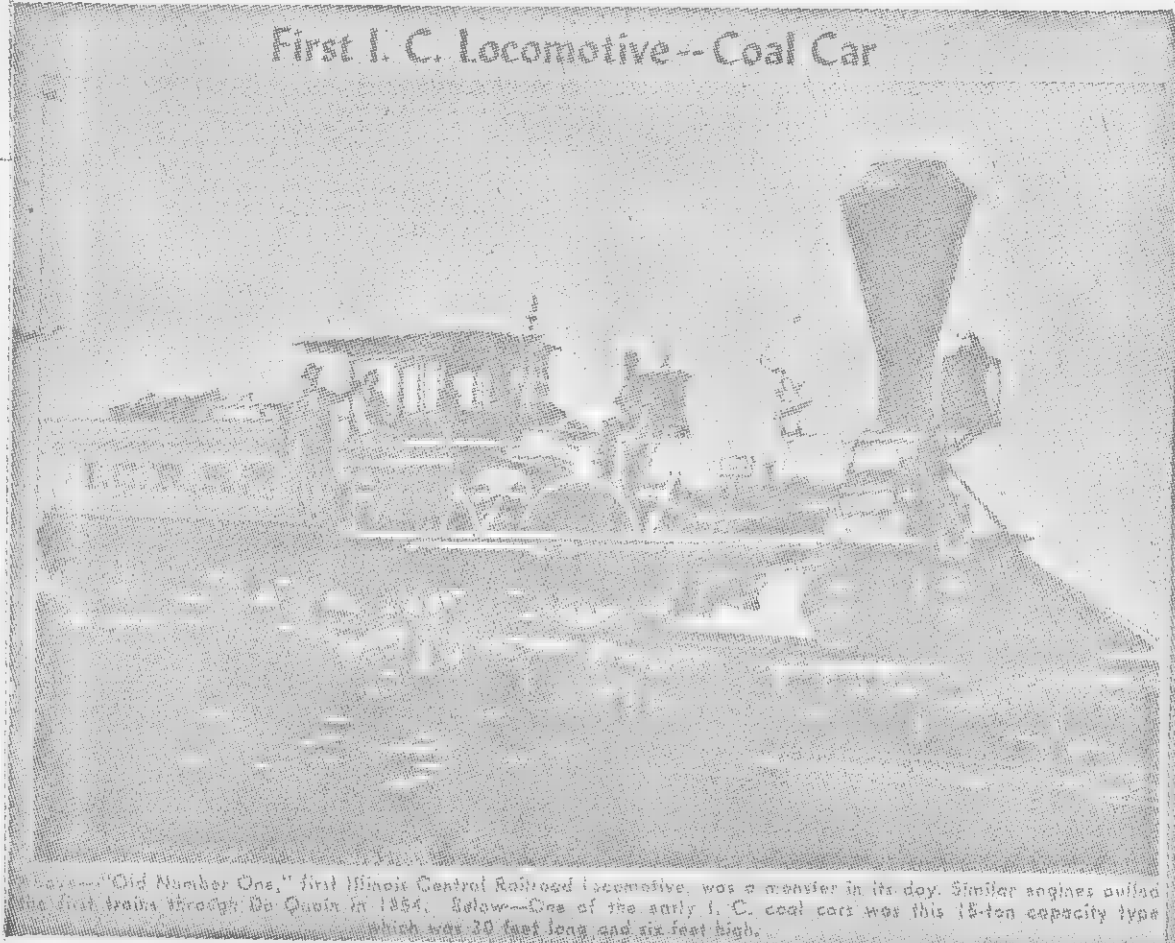








## First I. C. Locomotive -- Coal Car



Above—"Old Number One," first Illinois Central Railroad locomotive, was a monster in its day. Similar engines pulled the first trains through De Quoin in 1854. Below—One of the early I. C. coal cars was this 15-ton capacity type which was 20 feet long and six feet high.



### City's First--and Only--Street Car Line



Mr. and Mrs. Edward Milligan pose on the rear of a horse-drawn street car which once operated on Division street, between Main street and St. John. He was a brother of Rollo Milligan. The street car line began operation about 1888 and was discontinued about 10 years later. It was some time before the rails were removed.



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<sup>30</sup>History of Perry County, J. Wesley Neville

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<sup>32</sup>Article by Julius R. Swayne, DuQuoin Evening Call Centennial Edition, Saturday, September 19, 1953.

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September 19, 1922.



SUMMARY

This paper covers only a small portion of the historical firsts which have occurred during the one hundred and forty seven years of Perry County's history.

In a short paper such as this many events of importance and interest have to be omitted. I have through careful observation attempted to include in this paper the events which I feel to be of most importance.

Summary

This paper covers only a small portion of the historical  
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In a short paper such as this many events of importance  
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observation attempted to include in this paper the events  
which I feel to be of most importance.

CORRECTION to First known marked grave in Perry County, Illinois.

Old DuQuoin Cemetery      Sec 27, T6S, R1W

In Memory Of

EPHRAIM SKINNER

who died

Oct 3 1820

aged 52 yrs.

R. M. Spurgeon  
Oct 8, 1975.

CORRECTION to First known marked grave in Perry County, Illinois.

Old Indian Cemetery Dec 27, 1820, R1W

In Memory of

EPHRAIM SKINNER

who died

Oct 3 1820

aged 52 yrs.

E. W. Spurgeon  
Oct 8, 1975